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ABSTRACT

Regional training activities of campus-based women's centers, and needs assessment and evaluation studies of the National Women's Centers Training Project are discussed. The women's centers project at Everywoman's Center, University of Massachusetts, was designed to provide staff training in the following areas: power and leadership issues in women's groups, organizational issues, program planning, budget development, and communication skills. The establishment of training sites in four federal regions during the second funding year is discussed, and information is presented on site selection, training of regional staff, and the results of training in these regions. Follow-up study (1978-1979) results are presented concerning the impact of training on center operations and on 15 individual participants in 12 centers not affiliated with the University of Massachusetts center. In addition, 1978-1979 National Needs Survey results are presented for 99 women's centers. Information is presented on center characteristics, program planning and implementation needs, internal organizational problems, and relations between centers and campus administrators. Finally, key issues facing higher education and women's centers/women's programs are identified, based on a 1979 women's centers and higher education conference. (SW)

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INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S PROGRAMS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES:

A Summary of the Activities and Accomplishments of the National Women's Centers Training Project

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INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S PROGRAMS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES:

A Summary of the Activities and Accomplishments of the

National Women's Centers Training Project

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Project

The National Women's Centers Training Project of Everywoman's Center, University of Massachusetts/Amherst was begun during the 1976-77 academic year when the Project received funds from the U.S. Office of Education, Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEAP). The funds supported development of a training program to promote educational equity for women at the post-secondary level by increasing the effectiveness of campus-based women's centers. The training program was designed to meet the needs of campus-based women's centers by providing staff training in six areas: 1) power and leadership issues in women's groups; 2) organizational issues: 3) program planning; 4) budget development; 5) communication skills; and 6) program budget negotiation with campus administrators.

During the first year of the program, approximately 70 women (representing a total of 23 centers primarily from the Northeast) attended one of the five, week-long training sessions at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The major products produced during the first year of the program were the model training program itself and two manuals, Developing Women's Programs and Developing and Negotiating Budgets for Women's Programs. These booklets are available from the WEEA dissemination contactor, The Education Development Center, at cost.[1]

The second year of the Project was begun during the academic year 1978-79 with another grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Women's Educational Equity Act Program. This second year of funding provided for the national dissemination of the training program through the

[1]Education Development Center, 39 Chapel Street, Newton, Mass. 02160

establishment of training sites in four federal regions. A campus-based women's center in each region was selected to provide the training to other centers in that area of the country. More detailed information on the selection of regional sites, the training of regional site staff and the results of the training in these regions is presented in CHAPTER I, "REGIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES."

CHAPTER I also includes an overview of the week of training. Only brief descriptions of the sessions and schedule of the week are provided here. A comprehensive presentation of the training lectures, discussions and exercises along with bibliographies and commentary on the implementation of the training is available in To Make A Difference: A Trainer's Guide for Working with Campus-Based Women's Centers, Feminist and Other Women's Organizations from the Education Development Center.

Evaluation has been an integral part of the training program since the early planning stages. Pre and post interviews and skills assessments were used along with end-of-session and end-of-trainign questionnaires to provide data on the training's effectiveness and to guide the development process. The second year of funding allowed for a longer range of follow-up study on the training's impact. The findings from this evaluation study are discussed in CHAPTER 2, "EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S CENTERS TRAINING PROJECT."

In the second year of the Project, staff was also able to follow-up on the needs assessment of campus-based centers that had been conducted during the first year of operations. In conjunction with the first survey, the National Needs Survey undertaken in 1978-79 provides data on patterns and trends in centers over the past three years. Highlights of the findings from this national assessment are provided in CHAPTER 3, "RESULTS OF THE SECOND NATIONAL NEEDS SURVEY OF CAMPUS-BASED WOMEN'S CENTERS, 1978-79." A more detailed analysis, including comparative data

from 1976-77 and 1978-79 can be found in the report, From the State of the Art to the State of the Budget: A Report on the Status and Needs of Campus-Based Women's Centers in the U.S.A., which is also available from the Education Development Center.

The national needs survey, evaluation findings and the training itself all revealed the important impact that women's centers could have in bringing about educational equity. At the same time, they pointed to the enormous obstacles that centers face; obstacles that are compounded by current trends toward curricular and fiscal conservatism in higher education institutions. The Project also created a forum for the exchange of ideas and strategies around the topic of the future of women's centers in higher education. The "Women's Centers and Higher Education Conference" was held in Amherst, Massachusetts in July, 1979. A profile of the participants and agenda and highlights from the conference sessions are offered in CHAPTER 4.

CHAPTER 1

REGIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Selection of Regions for Training Sites

Project funding allowed for the training to be implemented in four regions. The first major task was to select those four federal regions. It was decided that the training sites should be located in regions with large number of campus-based women's centers. It was also felt that geographic distribution, ethnic or racial and socioeconomic population patterns of regions should be considered in order to maximize the outreach of the training to centers working with diverse groups.

A review of the national distribution of campus-based women's centers indicated that seven of the ten federal regions had reasonable numbers of women's centers.[1]

Federal Regions	Number of Women's Centers
Region I (New England)	126
Region II (N.Y. & N.J.)	80
Region III (Mid-Atlantic States)	34
Region IV (South-east)	37
Region V (Mid-west)	89
Region IX (Far West)	47
Region X (Pacific Northwest)	21

The training had already been conducted in Region I during 1976-77 and one-fifth of the participants in the training were from Region II.

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[1] The distribution figures were based upon our 1976-77 Needs Survey mailing list. This had been compiled using "Women's Centers: Where Are They?" by the Project on the Status and Education of Women and files of Everywoman's Center. We recognized that the figures were far from accurate but found that they did reflect the proportion of centers among regions.

Thus, those two regions were eliminated from consideration. Regions IV, V, IX, and X were finally selected since they offered geographic and demographic diversity and balance.

Site Selection Criteria

Primary and secondary considerations were developed to guide the selection of actual training sites. These criteria are listed below.

Primary Considerations:

1. Multi-faceted programming experience
2. Reasonable and stable funding
3. Staff members whose knowledge and experience would enable them to be effective trainers
4. Excellent relationships with campus administrators
5. Access to physical resources needed for training

Secondary Considerations:

1. Geographically accessible for other women's centers in region
2. Accessible by public transportation
3. Diversity of staff and clientele served
4. Regional visibility

Site Selection Process

Application packets were sent to the 173 known campus-based women's centers in Federal Regions IV, V, and IX. (Selection process for Region X will be considered later). To assist centers in determining whether they wished to be considered as a potential regional site for the Project, the application packet contained information on the background and developmental history of the Project and training program. Site selection considerations (as listed above), information on compensation to regional sites and a listing of Project and site responsibilities were also provided.

Responses to the 1976-77 Needs Survey where centers indicated that they would be interested in serving as regional resources for the Project were also used to build a pool of potential sites. To this pool were also added those centers which had contacted the Project during or after its initial year and indicated that should the program be extended to other parts of the country they would be interested in being involved. Centers thus identified were called, invited to apply and asked about other centers in their regions that could serve as regional sites.

Twelve centers from regions IV, V and IX applied to be training sites. All applications were screened using the stated criteria and directors or coordinators of the centers whose applications merited serious consideration were contacted by phone and more detailed interviews were conducted. The Project Co-Directors then selected the following centers as regional sites:

REGION IV	Women's Center University of Tennessee Knoxville, Tennessee	Director, Marilyn Kent
REGION V	Women's Services Ohio State University Columbus, Ohio	Director, Glenda Belote
REGION IX	Women's Center University of California Santa Barbara, California	Director, Gail Ginder

A different process was used in selecting the training site for Region X. In this instance the 1976-77 Needs Survey responses were used to identify centers in the region. Several were called and asked to recommend the centers in their region that they thought would meet the primary and secondary criteria. Phone interviews using the application form were conducted with the most likely candidates in the region, and the following site was chosen:

REGION X	Women's Information Center University of Washington Seattle, Washington	Director, Judy Hodgson

Training Activities

The Project activities had two focuses: 1) training the regional site's staff and preparing the regional campus administrators for their part in the training (referred to here as training-of-trainers or TOT); and 2) the training of women's centers at the regional training sites (referred to here as the training of centers, or TOC). The following series of activities were conducted in each of the four regions.

Pre-training activities. Approximately two months prior to each scheduled TOC, the regional sites sent out registration brochures advertising the training program to all campus-based women's centers in their regions. To register, participants had to complete a brief questionnaire about their center and their position within the center. Registered participants were then sent pre-training materials, which consisted of a schedule, a description of the training sessions, and an introductory-level article about budgeting.

Training-of-trainers. One week prior to the first TOC, Kathryn Girard and Joan Sweeney, the Project' Co-Directors, conducted a week-long training of selected staff at the regional training site. Prior to this week, the designated site trainers had been sent detailed materials on the format and content of each session and were asked to familiarize themselves with this material in preparation for working with the Project Co-Directors.

During the TOT, all sessions and materials were systematically reviewed with the site trainers. Site trainers were actively involved in modifying lectures, case studies and exercises in order to make them more regionally appropriate when such adaptations were seen as necessary. In addition, site trainers were included in examining strengths and weaknesses in their own teaching and facilitating style so that they could plan ways of working as teams and identify format changes that would better

fit their own styles.

Another important component of the TOT was the involvement of administrators from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and administrators from the regional site's campus. An essential part of the training program is a final simulation of a program budget negotiation meeting. This simulation (which is described below in the section, "Description of Training Sessions") enables trainees to present programs and budgets developed during the training to actual university decision-makers. At the University of Massachusetts the Acting Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Robert Woodbury, the Associate Provost for Special Programs, John Hunt, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affiars, Fred Preston, and the Director of the Community Development Center, Sally Freeman participated in the first year of the training and then, again, in the regional dissemination of the program. In most cases, two of these University of Massachusetts administrators would visit the regional site and meet with the new administrators who had agreed to work with the Project on their campuses. A series of formal meetings and informal talks between the two groups of administrators enabled the University of Massachuseets administrators who had participated in up to ten simulation sessions to share their experiences, to answer questions and concerns of administrators at the sites and to establish further the Project's credibility, the training's worth and the importance of administrator participation. While the Project's Co-Directors were greeted warmly and with interest by administrators at all the regional sites, the opportunity to discuss and learn about the training and their role in its implementation from their peers was essential to maintaining the level of administrator support required by the program.

Training of Women's Centers Staffs (TOC). The first week of the TOC in each region was initially scheduled for the week immediately following the TOT. Due to scheduling and registration problems there was a gap of one to three months between the training of regional site trainers and the training of representatives from other centers. The first week of training offered in a region was facilitated in part by the Project's Co-Directors, who had developed and implemented the training in 1976-77 and in part by the new site trainers. The site trainers most often took full responsibility for facilitating two of the training sessions; Program Development, and Budget Development and Negotiation. These were the most straight-forward in content and format and the ones in which new trainers generally felt the most confident. Other sessions were taught by the Project's Co-Directors with as much participation by the site trainers as they elected.

All sessions were evaluated by trainees and the evaluation data formed the basis for a critical review and feedback session among all trainers. Suggestions for modifying the content, exercises, pacing or style of presentation were exchanged during this session and a final determination of the viability of the training at the regional site was made.

Each regional site contracted to offer at least two weeks of training. The second week was the sole responsibility of the regional trainers, though Project staff were available for phone consultation prior to and during this second week of training, if necessary.

Description of Training Sessions

The week was scheduled to run from 9:00 Monday morning until 3:30 Friday afternoon. Contained within the week were sessions covering program planning, budget planning and negotiation, communication skills,

leadership and power in women's organizations and organizational issues.

Some of these sessions called upon participants to discuss their own and their center's experiences. In other sessions, participants suspended the constraints of their own situation to work within the framework of a case study of an institution of higher education. Participants were able to choose between two case studies: one a small, private, rural liberal arts college; the other a large public university. The case study approach was used in the program planning, budget and simulation sessions. Each of the workshops is described below.

Program Development Skills. Seven and one half hours of the training were devoted to this topic which included the identification of needs and the selection of objectives and program approaches. Due to time constraints, program evaluation was not covered. As part of this program planning sequence, participants studied a description of an institution and its women's center, identified critical needs, and develped a new program for that center. This provided the basis for work during the budget sessions and served as the proposal to be presented to an administrator during the simulation.

Budget Information, Development and Negotiation. Financial support for program is, in the end, essential, and several sessions were devoted to the skills and information important to securing fiscal support. Sessions focused on examining budget approaches that institutions use, the kinds of funds different types of institutions have to work with, and how that information can be used by a center in determining how much money to request, from whom, when, and in what format. Budget ploys and the advantages and disadvantages of various strategies were also explored. Participants then developed a budget request for their women's center using the program they had planned in the program development session while working with the case study.

Simulation. A culminating activity involved participants in presenting and negotiating funds for their program porposal. Program rationales and budgets were presented in small groups to university administrators. Prior to the meeting participants had identified, using information from the case study, the title and organizational responsibility of the administrator with whom they were to meet. The administrator took on the designated position. The group had approximately 45 minutes for their meeting and 45 minutes for analyzing what happened during the simulation. The administrators, trainees and trainers present as observers then shared perceptions of effectiveness, strategies and communication skills.

Communication Skills. This session focused on the skills needed to successfully negotiate a persuasive interview. Participants looked at defensive and supportive communication patterns, observed the effects of different verbal and non-verbal styles and role played interviews with administrators. Specific techniques to prepare for going into such an interview were also shared.

Leadership and Power. Leadership and power are often personally confusing and organizatinally problematic in women's groups. In this session, leadership was examined as a set of behaviors, many of which can be shared and learned. Leadership behaviors that promote open communication and effective functioning were contrasted with leadership styles that can be disfunctional in a collaborative or consensual group. Different bases of power and influence were explored and expressions of power were examined to differentiate among oppressive and positive aspects.

Organizational Issues. The meaning and the relationship of a women's center to the larger institution, and the function of organizational structure was examined in this session. Issues arising within any organizations but which are often especially difficult or confusing

in democratic, collaborative and non-hierarchical groups, such as accountability, membership, hiring and firing, decision-making, power, skills-sharing and information sharing were discussed and strategies for dealing with them explored. Participants had the opportunity to identify organizational issues of concern to their group and enlist the aid of one another as well as the facilitator in generating solutions.

Administrative Seminar. The administrators participating in the simulation conducted a seminar on the hows and whys of administrative decision-making. Topics covered included power, politics, strategies for obtaining different types of support, administrative dodges, and women in leadership positions, as well as any issues generated by the simulations or raised by participants.

Collaboration and Cooperation. This session took place outdoors, when weather permitted, or if necessary in a large, open indoor area. It provided a non-intellectual experience of cooperation, collaboration and leadership.

Number of Participants Trained Regionally

Approximately 81 women who represented 41 women's centers were trained. Table 1 presents the regional breakdown of this total.

TABLE 1

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS
WHO WERE TRAINED IN 1979

Region	Training Dates	Number of Participants	Number of Centers Represented
I	January 15-19	13	5
IV	April 2-6	8	5
X	May 20-25	13	10
	June 25-29	18	11
V	June 14-18	10	5
	July 9-13	12	9

Table 1 (con.)

Region	Training Dates	Number of Participants	Number of Centers Represented
IX	June 23-26	20	11
	November 5-9	20 (projected)	10 (projected

A second TOC was not conducted in Region IV due to insufficient institutional and regional women's center support. For Region IX the second TOC was postponed until November, 1979 because of schedule conflicts during the summer and fall of 1979. Figures for that training can only be projected at the time of this report.

Characteristics of Participants. As compared to those trained in Region I during 1976-77, more of the participants were older (ranging in age from 30 to 60). Many more represented centers with a clear hierarchical structure, a larger operating and salary budget and more continuity. Which is not to say that these budgets were adequate or that continuity was provided by more than one continuing staff person, usually the director. There was also a far greater diversity in the institutions housing the centers trained, and in the actual type of center or program affiliation. For example, many more community colleges were represented at the training during 1979. This was especially true in Region X, where the development of women's programs at campuses in the State of Washington is most pronounced in the community colleges. The centers from community colleges represented a range from multi-service women's centers to those focusing on a single issue, such as homemaker displacement or re-entry. In Region IV, by contrast, more participants came from private colleges and represented continuing education programs, sorority/dorm coordinating councils, and women's studies programs in addition to more typical multi-service women's centers.

The regional training sites were given the leeway to register participants interested in starting a women's center. One training session in Region V was composed primarily of those involved in student affairs who hoped to develop women's programs on their campuses.

Interestingly, while there were demographic variations from region to region, there was an overwhelming uniformity to the problems confronting centers. There were also similar levels of positive response to the training across all regions.

Evaluation of the Current Training Program by Participants

Of the eighty-one (81) women who had participated in the regional training programs as of October, 1979, sixty-two (62) of them completed the evaluation form at the end of the week.[2] This section will highlight some of the responses that were collected from the end-of-training assessment.

Participants were asked to rate the training program according to what they needed to learn and to compare it to other training programs in which they had taken part in the past. Based on what they needed to learn, 61% of the respondents rated the program as "excellent" and 34% rated it as "very good." When comparing it to other training programs, 75% rated the program as "excellent" and 25% rated it as "very good." In general, the participants thought the training met many of their needs.

Participants were also asked to indicate the usefulness and applicability of the training program to their work in their centers. When asked whether they could use the skills and information presented in the training program to effect changes in their centers, 76% of the respondents replied "yes." While this figure may seem low, those that

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[2]This excludes those trained in Region I, since extensive follow-up evaluation of the training in Region I has been completed and the interest here is in the response to and effectiveness of the training in other locations.

did not respond "yes" qualified their answers: Some participants were not affiliated with centers; some were just starting a center; and others reported that, in their position at the center, they did not have the power to effect changes. Some areas in which participants planned to take explicit action when they returned to their centers are presented below:

- "Get a staff person, secure more office space and increase the budget--wish me luck."
- "To take a more systematic approach to programming."
- "THE WHOLE STRUCTURE! ALL MY PROGRAMS!"
- "To prepare the budget in a different manner."
- "To better communication between paid staff and volunteers."
- "To do long-range planning."
- "I would like to do more effective pre-program budgeting and teach other women involved in the center to do the same thing. I also learned some new things about power and politics that will help strengthen my position in approaching administrators."

In general, participants were highly motivated by the training to make changes in their centers. The training program gave them specific skills and information that they found valuable and applicable.

As part of the evaluation questionnaire participants were also asked to indicate whether they felt they could use the skills and information from the training program in other organizations or in their personal lives. Almost all (98%) said that they could. Some specific responses suggesting the range of applications participants could foresee are presented below:

- "Some of the information was factual knowledge that could be applied to any program; but also, the training sessions related well in dealing with ourselves as we relate to other people and encouraged professionalism that would be desirable in other organizations."

- "Applicable to any group endeavor."
- "Understanding roles in groups I am in (presently as a church leader)."

The feedback about the training program provided by the respondents was generally positive. However, there were a few aspects of the training program's design that were problematic or had undesirable effects. In general, these problems arose because of the heavy time demand of the training program as well as the density of information. Many participants felt the training program could be improved by allowing more time for breaks to "digest the materials." The weight of the information and work load also generated some interpersonal difficulties among members of small groups. One participated noted "either forget process, or give more time to emphasize feelings and working through." In addition, the work-intensity of the training prohibited participants from interacting and sharing with each other casually or to the extent that many desired; although, on the whole, participants reported that they gained a lot from their interaction with other participants.

In sum, the training program seemed to be very effective in meeting the needs of women who work in a variety of types of campus-based women's centers in four very different regions of the country. Participants felt the training program gave them skills and information that was very applicable to both their centers and their personal lives. However, the training week was considered very intensive, and the training program might better be presented over more time and in a more relaxed, less information-packed format.

CHAPTER 2

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S CENTERS TRAINING PROJECT:
A TWO-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY

During the second year of the Project (1978-79), it was decided to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the training program by investigating its impact on the women's centers and on the individuals trained in 1976-77. This chapter presents a summary of the results of the two year follow-up survey.

Method

Of the 23 centers represented during the first year of the training 18 were not affiliated with UMass/Amherst and comprised the sample of centers that were surveyed.[1] Of those 18, 12 centers were eventually contacted; of the remaining six centers, three were defunct and three others were unreachable.

The survey was conducted in a thirty-minute telephone interview, during which a questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire addressed three major topics: What was the effect of the training on the center; to what extent were changes that occured in the center during the last two years related to the training; and what were the personal benefits of the training for the participants?

Results

A total of 15 women were interviewed. Eight of these women had participated in the training and were still working at their centers.

[1]The University of Massachusetts/Amherst campus has five women's centers--Everywoman's Center, Lesbian Union, Southwest Women's Center, Orchard Hill Women's Center and the Northeast Area Women's Center. The latter three are residential area women's centers.

Five of them were directors of their centers, one was a program coordinator, one was a faculty advisor and one was a student staff member. All had plans for staying at their centers except for the student member who was to graduate in Spring, 1979; and one director who was taking a job in women's programs in another city.

Three out of the 15 women interviewed had been trained but were not currently working at women's centers. Two of these women had left when their graduate programs ended and they moved to take jobs in other cities. The third woman left her center because money for her position (non-student director) was not continued. However, she is still in contact with the center's staff and may be rehired as the director when funding for the position is renewed.

The last four of the 15 women interviewed had not been trained two years ago, but work at centers where other staff had participated in the training. Two of these women were working at the center when others were trained and could comment on the effects of the training on the participants and the center. One respondent reported that she was present when the other staff members were trained, but that the women who were trained had graduated and left the center soon after the training. She concluded that, in their case, the center did not really benefit from the training. The last person interviewed indicated that the center had no organizational memory regarding the training program: the women currently working at the center did not know that anyone from their center had been trained, and had no records to indicate such participation.

Effects of the Training on the Center

Information Sharing. Almost all participants (12 out of 15), made an effort to share the information or skills from the training program with other staff at their centers. One respondent noted that she did not share the information because her whole staff had been trained. Most of the respondents indicated that they shared the information informally, usually through staff meetings whenever topics covered by the training arose. Some women did conduct more formal workshops based on the training and used materials obtained at the training to do so. At the time of the training one woman had been in the process of planning a women's center for her college. She reported that they adopted many of the ideas from the training in designing the center.

Nine out of the 15 respondents said that they used the training materials in their information sharing with the staff. The materials covering program development, budgeting, and communication skills were most frequently used. Only six of the respondents knew that printed booklets containing the program development and budgeting components of the training program were currently available.

Stated Benefits of the Training. Eleven of the fifteen respondents reported clear benefits of the training for their centers. The most frequently stated benefit was that it provided the trainees with a good perspective on the political dimension of their college or university, especially on the budget negotiation process. One woman said that it helped her "realize the need for political awareness--to become a part of the institutional governing body." Others stated that they realized the importance of keeping orderly records for budget negotiations. Another frequently stated benefit was an improved ability to work with administrators. One respondent stated that the training helped her

"work with administrators as allies rather than adversaries." She commented that she had had an antagonistic and offensive style prior to the training. After changing that style, she reported, she was able to get increased funding for an important staff position. A third frequently mentioned effect of the training was that it helped set directions or goals for the center. One woman reported that before the training "everyone was floundering around, saying 'What are we supposed to be doing' or 'How can we best use our resources?'". Another frequently stated benefit was that it facilitated staff communication and cooperation by focusing on leadership and power issues often disregarded or overlooked in their groups.

Of the three centers that reported no benefit from the training, most indicated that this occurred because the women that were trained left the center shortly after they returned from the training session. One respondent who was not trained explained that, "We realize now that all that stuff should have been recorded in stone, because it's really hard to pass that stuff along."

Changes in Centers as a Result of the Training. Only ten of the respondents were able to comment on the changes that occurred in their women's centers over time. These respondents were asked to identify the most significant change in the last two years. They were then asked to indicate if that change occurred as a direct result of the training, an indirect result, or whether it was unrelated to the training. Changes that were reported to be "directly related to the training program were:

1) getting organizational issues clarified
2) the granting of CETA funds to the center
3) more commitment of the staff to women's issues in a hostile university atmosphere

Changes that were reported as "indirectly" related to the training program were:

1) an increase in the director's (participant's) self-confidence
2) the examination of the center's long term goals
3) staff confidence that they could handle change as a result of their positive evaluation of themselves
4) the definition of preferred target groups for programs
5) a review of organizational goals and identity (i.e. what kind of center did they wish to be)

Eight respondents (seven who were trained and remained at the center plus one woman who was not trained but who was knowledgeable about changes in the center) were prepared to discuss changes more specifically. These women were read a list of 13 types of changes that their center could have experienced. Respondents were asked if a given change had occurred in their center in the last two years, and whether it was a direct result of the training, an indirect result, or whether the change was unrelated to the training. Table 1 presents the number of respondents who felt the improvement in their centers was either a direct or an indirect result of the training. In addition, some specific comments are included which are indicative of the specific impact the training had on the center.

Table 1

CHANGES IN CENTERS RELATED TO THE TRAINING

Change	Number of Centers Indicating Change Was Related to Training	Specific Impact Of the Training
1. Goals of the Center	5	-centers looked more closely at institutional demands -provided center with a system by which to state goals
2. Primary users of programs	3	-helped them decide who their target populations were
3. Organizational Structure of Center	5	-changes were made using concepts of accountability -external hierarchical needs and information sharing were examined
4. How issues of power and leadership are handled	3	-helped articulate these problems
5. How to develop programs	4	-helped by putting institutional concerns into framework; center now sets goals first -does needs assessment more often
6. Types of programs	2	-programs based more on needs assessment
7. Size of staff	1	-more ways to facilitate staff's work
8. Paid staff	2	
9. How staffing problems are perceived or handled	2	-awareness of ways the center's structure contributes to staff member's work and performance -importance of follow-up

Table 1 (con.)

Change	Number of Centers Indicating Change Was Related to Training	Specific Impact Of the Training
10. Collaboration and cooperation among staff	3	-more awareness of this need -communication is much more structured
11. Size of budget	4	-budget negotiation hints helped a center obtain an additional $10,000 -center has now set up a specific committee to handle budget work -better justification for budget increases
12. Administrative Support	0	
13. Collaboration with administrators	4	-heightened awareness -gave staff communication skills -evaluated how to deal with these tasks

The training was reported to have the most impact on setting center goals, establishing an organizational structure, program development, budget negotiations and collaboration with administrators.

Personal Effects of the Training on Participants. The eleven respondents who were trained reported a total of 18 different personal benefits that they derived from the training. The 10 most frequently reported benefits, along with the number of respondents who reported them, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

PARTICIPANTS' PERSONAL BENEFITS
FROM THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Benefit	Number of Respondents Who Reported It
1. Affirmation of existing skills	6
2. Increase in self-esteem	5
3. Provided them with a sense of collective struggle	4
4. Application of skills to other programs	3
5. Trainers were helpful as role-models	3
6. Enhanced ability to deal with administrators	3
7. Enhanced professional development	2
8. Gained respect for being more organized	2
9. Enchanced ability to deal with groups of people	2
10. Obtained support for their roles in center	2

When asked whether their role in the center changed as a result of the training, three out of nine participants said that it did. One woman reported that she was able to expand in certain ways because others took some responsibility. Another said that her history and experience in the center, along with the training, allowed her to be seen as a person to resolve conflicts.

When asked whether they had used the skills from the training program in other aspects of their life or work, all participants interviewed reported that they had. A number of women mentioned that it helped them in developing programs for other organizations in which they were involved. Others noted that it helped them in writing grant proposals.

Additional Comments. After the structured questionnaire was administered, we asked the participants if they had any additional comments regarding the training program. Below is a representation of some of those comments.

- "I don't know where I would have been without the training."
- "I would like to see the training available every other year, because of student turn-over."
- "I felt that they (the trainers) gave us the feeling that we could do things; that we could change things; that we didn't have to feel limited. It was very encouraging."
- "It was a great program."
- "The training gave me a big personal boost."

Summary and Conclusions

The training program of the National Women's Centers Training Project is very effective for women's centers that have a stable (non-student) staff. Student and staff turn-over seems to be the major barrier to the long-term effectiveness of the training program for centers. On the other hand, the program is very effective on a personal basis for all participants involved. Participants reported enchanced self-esteem and self-confidence. In addition, they reported that their skills in dealing with groups of people and authority figures in a professional setting were sharpened. These same skills were often used in other aspects of their lives and work, especially with other groups in which they were involved. It seems reasonable to conclude that the training program has long-lasting personal benefits for all participants involved, which, in turn, benefit the women's centers as long as the trained women remain on staff.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS OF THE SECOND NATIONAL NEEDS SURVEY OF CAMPUS-BASED WOMEN'S CENTERS, 1978-79

When the National Women's Centers Training Project began two years ago, one of the first steps of the Project was to conduct a National Needs Survey of campus-based women's centers in order to identify the needs and problems that centers experience. The first survey (NS I) was mailed to approximately 380 centers in 1976-77; 131 were completed and returned. The second Needs Survey (NSII) was mailed to approximately 480 centers in 1978-79, of which 99 were completed and returned in time to be included in the data analysis. Both surveys were very similar and queried four major aspects of centers:

1) descriptive information regarding their age, budget, types of programs offered and staffing;
2) their needs; expecially surrounding program planning and implementation;
3) internal organizational issues that are problematic;
4) the nature of their relationships with campus administrators

This chapter briefly summarizes the results of the second National Needs Survey (NSII) and highlights certain findings of NS I for comparison purposes.

Descriptive Characteristics of Centers

What characterizes a "typical" campus-based women's center? Table 1 presents the data regarding the descriptive characteristics of centers collected from both NSI and NS II. Examing the results from NS II, the average age of the centers was five years. They had approximately

12 staff members, four of whom were paid. However, centers reported that only one staff member was paid full-time. Sixty percent (60%) of the staff members were students, who worked primarily as volunteers. Only about 25% of the staff had worked at a center for more than a year, indicating a high rate of staff turn-over.

The staffing patterns also reflect the budget picture of most centers. The median budget for centers from campus sources increased from $3,483 in 1976 to $3,950 in 1978. As shown in Table 1, 22% of the centers surveyed for NSII reported that they had budgets of $1,000 or less and over half had budgets of less than $5,000. The most frequently reported sources of these funds in 1978 were student government associations (45%) and academic dean's offices (31%).

The percentage of centers which received funding from non-campus sources decreased from 36% in 1976 to 21% in 1978. The median amount of these budgets in 1978 was approximately $10,000. Sources for these funds were reported to be CETA, corporate, foundation and federal grants.

Despite these small budgets, a typical center offered nine programs in 1978 and served an average of 2,362 women. The most frequently offered programs were: 1) a library; 2) a drop-in center; 3) medical, legal, educational and welfare referrals; 4) career counseling; and 5) a speakers service. Comparing the frequencies across the two years, there was an increase of 10% in the number of centers offering career and employment counseling and affirmative action advocacy in 1978. In addition, there was a decrease of 5% or more in the percentage of centers which offered short-term counseling, assertiveness training, and support groups in 1978. This may suggest a shift toward advocacy and institutional change and away from personal development and direct service as the primary focus of center's programs.

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF CAMPUS-BASED WOMEN'S CENTERS:

	1976-77 NS I	1978-79 NS II
Years in existence	3	5
Staff (Total number)	*	12
Paid full-time	--	1
Paid part-time (students)	--	2
Paid part-time (non-students)	--	1
Volunteer (students)	--	5
Volunteer (non-students)	--	3
Budget: Campus Sources		
$0	13%	10%
up to $1,000	17	12
1,000 - 5,000	32	34
5,000 - 10,000	12	10
10,000 - 20,000	6	10
20,000 - 50,000	14	16
50,000 - 75,000	5	5
over $75,000	1	4
median	$3,483	$3,950
Percentage of centers who receive non-campus funds	36%	21%
Median non-campus budget		$10,000
Average number of programs offered	--	9
Most frequently offered programs (% of centers)		
library	79%	88%
drop-in center	78	81
medical,legal,educational,welfare referrals	71	67
short-term counseling	67	62
assertiveness training	63	56
support groups	60	52
credit or non-credit workshops	59	63
career counseling	57	67
re-entry or support programs for non-traditional women students	57	56
speakers service	56	67
newsletter	53	60
affirmative action/discrimination advocacy	30	46
academic courses	25	29
long-term counseling	12	18
Average number of women who use center each year	--	2,632

*This data was collected in a different form on NSI and is not transferrable to this report.

How are women's centers staff organized? What sort of organizational structure do centers have? Six major organizational structures were categorized. Table 2 presents these categories, as well as the percentage of centers in NS II who described their organizational structure in that way.

TABLE 2

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF CENTERS

Type of Structure	Percentage of Centers
1. Center has a director and she makes all decisions	9%
2. Center has a director but she consults with an Advisory Board, faculty advisor or college administrator before she makes decisions	28%
3. Center has a director, but different groups in center have final decision-making authority	21%
4. Center has a director in name only, and all members make all decisions	25%
5. Center has no director; a small group of people make all decisions	2%
6. Center has no director; all members make all decisions	13%

These data reveal the variety of organizational structures women's centers use. Predicatably, factors such as size of budget, number of paid staff, and administrative support tend to correlate with different structures. While detailed findings are beyond the scope of this chapter, they are presented in From the State of the Art to the State of the Budget: A Report on the Status and Needs of Campus-Based Women's Centers in the U.S.A., also available from the Education Development Center.[1]

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[1] Education Development Center, 39 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02160

MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

Table 3 presents the eight organizational issues that campus-based women's centers found most problematic. The overwhelming issue, in terms of both its universality and scope, is the tendency of staff to overcommit time and energy to the center. In the most recent survey, 75% of the centers identified this as a problem. Other issues that centers identified as problematic also seem related to over-commitment. The tendency to get "burned-out" working at the center, and the need for more staff development seem closely connected. In the face of inadequate budgets, client demands for programs and constant staff turnover, staff dissatisfaction is not surprising. Seven out of the eight most frequently identified issues concern the staff. Dissatisfactions were expressed around issues such as tension between the needs of staff, program administration needs and the needs of participants; differing personal allegiances among staff; and how power is distributed in the center. The other problematic issue concerned whether women's centers' programs should become integrated into the mainstream of institutions.

TABLE 3

CENTERS' MOST PROBLEMATIC ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

Issue	Percentage of Centers
Tendency to overcommit time and energy	75%
Integration of programs into mainstream of institution	69%
Tendency for people to get "burned-out" working at center	65%
Tension between needs of staff, program administration needs and needs of participants	59%
Staff development	51%
Differing personal allegiances (of staff)	50%
How to coordinate and divide work	47%
How power is distributed	46%

CENTERS' NEEDS

Centers were asked to identify critical needs that they had to meet on an ongoing basis (apart from organizational issues). They were also asked if they could meet those needs with their available resources. These two responses were combined to produce an analysis showing the most critical needs which centers require help in meeting. The nine most critical needs that emerged from this analysis are:

1) Additional funding for new programs
2) Information on how other centers operate
3) Skills in determining needs
4) Strategies for reaching diverse groups
5) Information on ways to write funding proposals
6) Information on ways to obtain non-campus funding
7) Ways of determining resources needed to implement programs
8) Strategies for deciding about limiting, expanding or terminating programs
9) Skills in making media contacts

NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CENTERS AND CAMPUS ADMINISTRATORS

As shown in Table 4, there was a substantial decrease from 1976 to 1978 in the percentage of centers who reported that they received support from administrators with budgetary influence (from 82% to 58%, respectively). Of those centers who reported having this kind of support, they reported receiving it from an average of four administrators. When asked about the nature of such support, centers most frequently cited recognition of the worth of their programs: even here, the percentage of centers who reported this decreased from 74% to 56% in the last two years. Moreover only 40% of the centers reported that they received budget decisions in their favor from supportive administrators.

TABLE 4

NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CENTERS AND CAMPUS ADMINISTRATORS

	1976 NS I	1978 NS II
Percentage of centers who receive budgetary support from administrators	82%	58%
Average (mean) number of administrators who support center	--	4
Percentage of centers whose administrators provide:		
- budget decisions in their favor	43%	40%
- helpful information	58%	51%
- advocacy for programs	57%	51%
- recognition of the worth of the programs	74%	56%
Skills needed to obtain administrators' support:		
- strategies for minimizing resistance	67%	74%
- more collaboration on projects	54%	70%
- skills in negotiating the budget	50%	55%
- more skills in program development	51%	54%

In the most recent survey, we asked centers to indicate what hinders effective interaction with administrators. Sixty-two percent reported that factors influencing the college or university as a whole were at fault. Specifically, 35% reported that budget cuts across the college or university as a whole impacted negatively on their centers. Fifty-seven percent of the centers indicated that the administrators' attitudes, styles or politics underlie decreasing support. For example, one respondent reported that they had a "conservative administration--Vice Chancellors have been known to suggest women don't belong at the university."

When asked what would help centers obtain the support needed for their programs, the largest percentage of centers indicated that they could use assistance with strategies for minimizing resistance. Other approaches frequently cited as necessary were: 1) more collaboration on projects with

administrators; 2) better skills in negotiating budgets; and 3) more skills in program development.

Another important indication of centers' status is how they are perceived by the campus in general. Centers described how they thought they were perceived by others: What was their center's image on campus? In terms of a general perception, over half (54%) of the centers felt that they were viewed positively, 22% felt that they were perceived negatively, and 39% said they were perceived as radical feminists and 3% said they were perceived as all lesbians. On the other hand, seven percent reported that the center was perceived as too conservative. On a more positive note, 54% of the centers felt they were perceived as an important organization on campus, and 36% said they were considered an integrated part of the college or university programming.

In sum, the nature of centers' relationships to the campus administration and the campus as a whole was quite mixed. A majority of centers reported that they received support from campus administrators; however this support--both more and fiscal--seems to have decreased in the last two years. In attempting to stem this tide, centers are looking to increase the amount of collaboration between themselves and administrators in developing programs.

PORTRAIT OF CAMPUS-BASED WOMEN'S CENTERS WITH LARGER BUDGETS

The findings discussed here are based on analyses using the mean campus-based budgets in 1978-79 for each group. The overall mean (missing data excluded) for 1978-79 campus-based budget was $18,182. As a point of reference, keep in mind that the median was only $3,950.

Older centers (six years or older) had larger budgets than younger centers (four years or younger): $26,186 and $15,676, respectively. In

addition, larger campus budgets were positively correlated with the number of paid staff, and with the number of staff who worked more than one year. Moreover, centers with a lower proportion of students on staff had larger campus budgets than those with a higher proportion of students on staff. Centers with staffs that consisted of 80% or fewer students had average budgets of $25,750 while those who had over 80% students on staff had average budgets of $10,396.

Though we cannot make any causal explanations based upon this data, it is interesting to speculate on the relationship of the staffing patterns--particularly the attrition or turn-over--and the size of the budget. It seems likely that centers with paid staff and fewer students have a lower staff turn-over rate and that this is critical to their success. These centers with more staff continuity, establish lasting relationships with important campus administrators who have budgetary influence. Centers more dependent on volunteers and student staff, on the other hand, are likely to have high turn-over rates and less success in establishing the campus relationships important to securing adequate budgets. It seems that high staff turnover may be at once a cause of low budgets and an effect of them. It surely is one of the most problematic patterns for centers.

Following this line of analysis, it seems likely that centers having good relationships with campus administrators receive larger budgets than average. The average institutional budget for centers who responded "yes" to the question, "Do you get support from administrators with budgetary influence?" was $31,335. Those that replied, "No--those administrators are not in those position" had average budgets of $14,300. And those that replied that they got all their funds from student government had average budgets of $5,427. Thse data suggest that building relationships

with campus administrators, even though they may not have direct budgetary influence over the center, leads to higher campus-based budgets. A second analysis supports this conclusion. Centers who obtain part of their funding from an academic or student affairs dean's office tend to have larger campus budgets than those centers who obtain their funds from a student government organization. These data suggest that it pays to develop good relationships with campus administrators. Of course, on most campuses, faculty and professional staff are more likely to be in a position to create those good relationships.

Having good relationships with administrators seems to be beneficial for centers. Is having a good reputation on campus among students, faculty and the administration also related to higher funding? Centers that reported a predominantly "good" reputation had average budgets of $27,623, those who had predominantly "poor" reputations had average budgets of $8,736, and those with "mixed" reputations had average budgets in between those two figures.

In sum, it seems that centers who are more successful in obtaining campus funding are those that are older, who have more stable staffs, and who have developed relations with campus administrators and positive reputations on the campus at large. However, the data presented here represent only the first level of analysis. Many more questions need to be asked and more analyses run in any attempt to identify the factors that lead to effective campus-based centers.

THE FUTURE OF CAMPUS-BASED WOMEN'S CENTERS

In this chapter, we have examined some changes in women's centers as evidenced by comparative data from NS I and NS II. The changes provide mixed signals. On the one hand the data reveal a small increase in campus-based budgets, an increase in the average age of centers--suggesting

that centers are not dying out on one campus only to be reborn on another, but are actually continuing--and an increase in the number of programs offered and number of clients reached. These signs indicate that centers may be attaining a more stable base in their institutions. However, other signs indicate that centers may be in danger: the percentage of centers who received non-campus-based funding in 1978 decreased from 1976; administrators are generally less supportive of centers' programs; there was a reduction in the percentage of centers who had at least one full-time staff position; and there is an overall increase in perceived organizational issues including staff burn-out and subsequent turn-over.

How should centers improve their chances for survival? As a culmination of the National Women's Centers Training Project in 1979, a conference on "Women' Centers and Higher Education" was held in order to discuss this question. A summary of the proceedings of this conference is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN'S CENTERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

As a final activity the Project sponsored a conference entitled, "Women's Centers and Higher Education." Held in Amherst, Massachusetts, July 25-26, 1979, it was designed to be a working conference at which invited participants met to identify and discuss some of the major issues confronting women's centers as well as the impact on these centers of some of the current concerns with which higher education institutions are faced.

The participants included representatives from the Project, it's regional training sites and other selected women's centers, national associations concerned with women and educational equity and the U.S. Office of Education Women's Educational Equity Act Program. Those in attendance were:

Rusty Belote	Director, Women's Services Ohio State University Columbus, Ohio
Mary Ellen Brune	Director, Women's Center Bellevue Community College Seattle, Washington
Karen Eichstaedt	Program Coordinator, Everywoman's Center University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts
Ruth Fessenden	Program Coordinator, Everywoman's Center University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts
Sally Freeman	Director, Community Development Center University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts
Barbara Gaines-Leovna	Director, Women's Center Brooklyn College Brooklyn, New York
Gail Ginder	Director, Women's Center University of California Santa Barbara, California
Kathryn Girard	Co-Director, National Women's Centers Training Project University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts

Cleveland Haynes	Program Officer Women's Program Staff U.S. Office of Education
Judy Hodgson	Director, Women's Information Center University of Washington Seattle, Washington
Carolyn Joyner	Program Officer Women's Program Staff U.S. Office of Education
Grace Mastalli	Associate Director, Project on the Status and Education of Women Association of American Colleges Washington, D.C.
Elaine Reuben	Director, National Women's Studies Association University of Maryland College Park, Maryland
Particia Sorce	Evaluator, National Women's Centers Training Project University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts
Joan Sweeney	Co-Director, National Women's Centers Training Project University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts
Joan Thompson	Acting Director Women's Program Staff U.S. Office of Education

It should be noted that conference participants from centers do not represent "typical" or the majority of campus-based women's centers on dimensions such as number of paid staff and size of budget. However, they are more comparable in terms of variety and number of programs or services offered and above average in terms of number of women who use the center's services on an annual basis. Centers represented at the conference were reflective of a small percentage of women's centers which have obtained some significant level of administrative support, institutional fiscal support and have a diversity in the comprehensiveness of their programs which enables them to address a wide range of women's needs. They typified centers that, in a time of shrinking resources

and more competition for resources within institutions, might be seen as having some additional level of sophistication regarding gaining access to needed resources. An intent of the conference was to provide a forum for their perspectives with the hope that the resulting information could benefit the hundreds of other women's programs and women's centers that haven't yet achieved the fiscal and programmatic stability which provides the "breathing space" and often facilitates being reflective.

Therefore, the focus of the two days was on looking at not only the satisfaction and pride of what has been accomplished at centers on campuses around the country, but also at what these organizations will be facing in the foreseeable future. It was felt that rather than be put in a reactive position when hard questions like "Why have a women's center?" and "What is the justification for your programs in a time of reduced institutional budgets and increased needs in other areas?" were asked, taking the initiative in posing those concerns and examining various responses would provoke more productive and less defensive responses.

Acknowledging the importance of women's centers asking such questions themselves, the conference agenda set out the following tasks for the two days of work:

1) To share information on the national and regional patterns in staffing, programming and institutional support of women's centers;
2) To identify the trends, issues and patterns affecting higher education and women's programs (especially centers);
3) To suggest interventions that would assist women's programs in responding constructively to some of those institutional problems.

The formats chosen in which to address these tasks were a combination of small and large group discussions and some more formal presentations. This provided those attending with both the direct opportunity to hear

and respond to view points from the full range of centers, programs and organizations present, as well as to elaborate on and discuss within smaller, working groups of participants comments and suggestions made in response to key issues from the large group session.

Some of the information which was presented at the conference regarding national patterns in staffing, programming and institutional support is available in brief form in Chapter III. As that data is provided elsewhere in this report it will not be repeated here. Additionally, a more detailed reporting can be found in the publication From the State of the Art to the State of the Budget: A Report on the Status and Needs of Campus-Based Women's Centers in the U.S.A.[1]

Presentation of the data on prevailing trends regarding women's centers nationally provided those participating with an overview within which they could place and appreciate their experience and perspectives, as well as a common framework from which to identify patterns and issues affecting higher education and women's centers and programs.

Identified Key Issues Facing Higher Education and Women's Centers/Women's Programs

Throughout both the generation of possible items for discussion as well as in the subsequent work to identify key concerns, participants continually returned to and reiterated the belief that the responsibility for addressing and struggling with the issues identified is a mutual one. Higher education institutions cannot expect women's centers to provide direct services to deal with issues of educational equity and address institutional sexism without provision of fiscal and administrative support commenserate with the scope and range of the tasks undertaken. Correspondingly, centers and

[1]Available from Education Development Center, 39 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02160.

other women's programs need to be aware that they are existing in an institutional context strained by shrinking resources and thus work to select strategies and provide programs which significantly impact on the needs of their clients in a manner which maximizes the use of their resources.

For women's centers to remain viable and responsive to client needs and to play a leadership role regarding educational equity in the 1980's, a number of issues will need to be addressed. The considerations presented below are those on which it was felt higher education institutions and women's centers would need to engage in substantive dialogue as well as a mutual exploration and struggle toward solutions.

1) IMPACT OF THE LOSS OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

   This was seen as exacerbating inclinations toward privatism, protection of turf and conservatism or maintenance of the status quo, as well as increasing tensions and the sense of having to scramble to justify one's existence.

2) IMPACT ON CENTERS OF STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH DATED AND OFTEN ENTRENCHED INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS.

   In this regard, lack of institutional flexibility and a resultant inability or unwillingness to shift patterns of response/ allocation to meet current needs of women students was a particular concern. Related to this was the issue of how to get the prevailing institutional decision makers to consider and fund cost effective programs for women and validate the work of the centers.

3) IMPACT ON MANY WOMEN'S CENTERS (AS MINIMALLY FUNDED, MARGINAL UNITS) OF CONSTANT TURNOVER OF TOP ADMINISTRATORS.

This was seen as often being a matter of struggling as a "marginal" organization with the dilemma of updating/educating the new administrator(s) regarding the center in order to maintain previous support vs. "getting on with the work." A related concern expressed was that of "policy vs. practice changes" by the institution, or that of how to sufficiently institutionalize commitments and changes/gains made by centers so each staff doesn't have to "start over."

4) DIFFICULTY OF GENERATING LONG RANGE, COMPREHENSIVE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF WOMEN GIVEN THE TENUOUSNESS OF CENTERS' FISCAL AND POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AT MANY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

Related areas of concern were the difficulty of even those more day-to-day efforts given the lack of or failure of administrative leadership at higher education institutions regarding women's issues; need for alliances with the few women who are in top administrative positions (acknowledging that they may or may not currently identify themselves as feminist or interested in women's issues).

5) HOW ARE CENTERS TO GET THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SURVIVE?

This topic surfaced the issues of direct service provision and/or institutional change/advocacy; the importance of the sheer presence of a center as a reminder to the institution that there are needs it is not meeting through other services it is currently funding on campus; being pressed into competing

with or against constituencies that may have similar needs and what was felt to be pressure to create or define the women's center in terms of a "unique mission" to justify its existence and funding.

6) HOW TO DEAL WITH INCORPORATING OR BALANCING CLIENTS'/WOMEN'S CENTER STAFFS' AND ADMINISTRATORS' DIVERSE AND OFTEN CONFLICTING VIEWS REGARDING WOMEN'S NEEDS, CENTER PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM APPROACHES.

Recognizing that centers can't be all things to all people, the key concern here was program autonomy or self definition and the stress on centers and their staff of attempting to respond to multiple sources and types of demands given inadequate resources. Staff burnout and high rates of staff turnover were seen as related to these conflicting pressures. A corollary concern in regard to this was identifying and responding to the needs of women who struggle with double and triple discrimination (i.e., sex and race, and sex, race and class).

7) ATTRITION AND THE FAILURE OF INSTITUTIONS TO ADDRESS "QUALITY OF LIFE" ISSUES AS THEY RELATE TO RETENTION OF STUDENTS IN GENERAL AND THE NEEDS OF WOMEN IN PARTICULAR.

Helping women to remain in or be able to attend school was seen as requiring solutions to what many administrators view as "old" problems (dealing with fundamental survival issues like child-care, housing, transportation, etc.) that aren't viewed as "interesting" or seen as something to allocate resources to address. This dilemma was seen as a stumbling block for both centers and the institutions themselves in that problems such as these with which many students are faced often are actually

beyond the scope of the higher education institutions and seemingly beyond intent and ability of most other social institutions to adequately resolve.

8) HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AS INCREASING "DATA-BASED" CONTEXTS IN WHICH THE EFFORTS AND PROGRAMS OF CENTERS ARE OFTEN DIFFICULT TO QUANTIFY.

Acknowledgement was made of the need for ongoing and increased sophistication of centers in this regard. However, a concern and the difficulty in part was also seen to be that in many cases we're dealing with varied perceptions of what constitutes a "real need." This then raised the dilemma of who defines "real needs" at higher education institutions and determines which merit "real" institutional support. Participants felt this issue was further complicated by the difficulty of demonstrating that one's programs/interventions have made a difference in the quantifiable way, when much of what centers are dealing with is both "political" and involved with "quality of life" issues for women.

Recommendations to Women's Centers/Programs Regarding Selected Issues

Of the identified considerations and related issues, participants focussed on the following four concerns as being ones to which centers could profitably address attention:

1) Shrinking institutional resources
2) Need for responsiveness of programs to various client populations
3) Dealing with "quality of life" issues in a data-based context
4) Effecting policy and decision-making on campuses.

In regard to each, there were specific suggestions and recommendations

made by those present, which are detailed below.

1) SHRINKING INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

- Maintain/increase center's visability in key portions of institutions,
- Avoid getting caught in "shrinking institutional resources" arguments, or beginning to think primarily in terms of "accomodating."
- Develop (or continue) a pro-active (rather than a reactive) stance regarding center's budget.
- Maintain or acquire direct access to decision makers with budget authority.
- Push harder for tougher decisions regarding re-allocation of resources and change of priorities (i.e., stop being defensive about what we want and the need to re-allocate resources).
- Pay close attention to needs of clientele and the needs of the institution -- re-assess needs and re-prioritize use of your resources in an ongoing way.
- Take the initiative in regard to redefinition or revision of program focusses or services that center provides; emphasize complementary and supplementary nature of center's efforts to those of other offices or units providing similar services.
- Understand why things do get supported/funded in tight times (e.g., fulfillment of affirmative action requirements) and know how to use that to the center's advantage.
- Get clients (or others) to send letters to and "lobby" institutional officials when they have a positive response to services or programs the center provides.
- In dealing with administrators, recognize shrinking institutional

resources problem; but, emphasize center's responsiveness to shifts in client needs (if true) and that in time of fiscal constraints you should be treated differently than a unit which isn't being responsive and operating that way (i.e., "rewarded").

- Validate resource provision, technical assistance, consulting with others on campus and elsewhere as legitimate parts of your work. If you have a "model program" or high degree of experience and expertise in an area, it needs to and should be shared.

2) NEED FOR RESPONSIVENESS TO VARIOUS CLIENT POPULATIONS

- Do more extensive needs assessment, rather than assuming we already know about or that the current needs of various populations match our own personal and/or organizational (i.e., women's centers) interests and focus.
- Important to remember that those coming to doors are not the only ones with needs. Recognize, value and respond to needs which may be different than center staff perceives them and realize that for any given type or area of need, various portions of the client population will be at different developmental stages.
- Important to prioritize and periodically review programs to assure responsiveness to current needs of populations with whom center is working.
- Representation of populations on center staff -- involve those we're working with and for; empowerment through involvement.
- "Contemporary CR" to address current issues/needs of students, faculty, staff and community women and in so doing create the demand or sense for these women of their being able to expect

their needs to be met. Work with women in a way which encourages them to say what has this institution or what has this women's center done for me lately.

- Work in coalition with minority women's groups on the parallel concerns of racism and sexism.
- Respond well to some needs, rather than spreading resources too thinly and diluting effectiveness of response.

3) DEALING WITH "QUALITY OF LIFE" ISSUES IN A DATA-BASED CONTEXT

- Since for many in higher education institutions women's centers/ programs don't exist to the extent that we don't exist in the literature of various fields, importance of making ourselves/ our work visable in the literature and of becoming part of the "data base" of the culture, since we do exist as a vital part of the social reality for women.
- Develop and validate "alternative" ways of conducting, using and valuing research on women.
- Recognize spin-off research benefits to what we do at women's centers; importance of acknowledging and learning how to maximize the interrelatedness and complementarity of women's centers and women's studies programs at higher education institutions.
- Use technology (e.g., computers) to maximize our use of our own and institutional resources.
- Foster development of our own networks for research and information dissemination to encourage use of what we have and the generation of more of a data base on perceived needs of women, examples of effective programmatic responses, trends and patterns in various areas as well as persons and organizations who can provide consultation or technical assistance so that we

can more effectively use the time, expertise and resources which women's centers and programs have and are developing.

4) AFFECTING POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING

- Importance of understanding and dealing with the fact that many of those involved in decision-making and policy formation regarding higher education often think that there no longer is discrimination against women.
- Deal with and work to counteract women's centers resistance to and difficulty with getting involved with power and issues of policy formation.
- Don't let efforts be paralyzed by fears of cooptation and distrust/ disdain for traditional male political activity within institution.
- Important to understand and know how to work with formal as well as informal types and systems of power, as well as how to effectively use networking to maximize use of currently limited resources and expand base of informed, powerful women.

The comments of one participant provided an apt note on which to wind up the work of those two days, as well as a challenge for centers and others who would use the information provided here; "...the present is the past of the future and we can create the past of those futures now."